

BETHLEHEM STEEL COMPANY, RAILROAD OFFICE
(Bethlehem Steel Corporation,
Blast Furnace Office)
Cambria Iron Works
Lower Works
Johnstown
Cambria County
Pennsylvania

HAER No. PA-313-B

HAER
PA
11-JOT9
134B-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

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Cambria Iron Works

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Location: Lower Works, Johnstown, Cambria
County, Pennsylvania

Quad: Johnstown, Pennsylvania

UTM: 17 E.676510 N.4466900

Date of Construction: ca. 1925

Fabricator: unknown

Present Owner: Bethlehem Steel Corporation

Present Use: Abandoned

Significance: This small two-story brick building
was erected by Bethlehem Steel
about 1925, and served as an office
for its rail operations.

Historian: Gray Fitzsimons

Project Information:

The results of the study of Cambria County were published in 1990: Fitzsimons, Gray, editor, Blair County and Cambria County, Pennsylvania: An Inventory of Historic Engineering and Industrial Sites (Washington, D.C.: America's Industrial Heritage Project (AIHP) and HABS/HAER, National Park Service). The contents of the publication were transmitted to the Library of Congress as individual reports. Research notes, field photos and copies of historic photos collected during the project were transmitted to the AIHP Collection, Special Collections, Stapleton Library, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Indiana, PA 15705.

HISTORY

This two-story brick building measures approximately 30' x 20'. It contains a gable roof with an intersecting gable extension, a one-story brick wing, and a concrete foundation. All of the original windows have been infilled with glass-block masonry. The building is currently vacant.

In the early-twentieth century, the Cambria Steel Company relied on two railroads, the Baltimore & Ohio and the Pennsylvania, for long distance shipping of its steel products. The movement of goods between the steel plants within the Conemaugh Valley was handled by a local carrier, the Conemaugh & Blacklick (C&BL) Railroad, which incorporated in 1925 and claimed over 52 miles of standard gauge track. Soon after Bethlehem Steel acquired the old Cambria Steel Company from Midvale Steel & Ordnance Company in 1924, it upgraded its own railroad that serviced the mills at Franklin, Gautier, and the Lower Works. This small two-story brick building was erected by Bethlehem Steel about 1925, and served as an office for its rail operations. By 1935, Bethlehem Steel controlled about 50 miles of standard-gauge track which connected with the C&BL. The C&BL continued to provide the locomotives and rolling stock for Bethlehem Steel.

By the 1960s the railroad office was used as an office for the only remaining blast furnace operation at the Lower Works. When Blast Furnace No. 5 was retired after the Flood of 1977, the building remained in use as an office for Car Repair Shop No. 4, a large 1950s building located immediately behind the two-story structure. About 1980 the office was vacated and it is currently unoccupied.

SOURCES

Bethlehem Steel Corporation, "General Arrangement of Lower Works Division: Drawing No. 123030; December 1, 1983," in possession of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation, Engineering Division, Johnstown.

Bethlehem Steel Engineering Department, "History of the Evolution of the Johnstown Plant: Bethlehem Steel Company, 1852-1935; (revised 1958)," unpublished paper in the possession of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation, Engineering Division, Johnstown, pp. 21, 41, 47.

"Key Plan, Johnstown Plants: February 16, 1923; revised January 26, 1927, March 29, 1930, and February 13, 1939," (copy available at the Canal Museum, Center for Canal History and Technology, Easton, Pennsylvania).